Overseas Pipeline Projects

1480. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to lay networks of pipelines to bring in gas from overseas land;

(b) whether it is a fact that some of the countries are obstructing the idea of pipeline networks; and

(c) if so, how Government are going to meet the energy requirements of India in future in the absence of such networks?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Yes, Sir. India is pursuing import of natural gas from Iran through an onland pipeline *via* Pakistan, and from Myanmar through onland pipeline *via* Bangladesh. India has also expressed an interest in participating in the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan pipeline.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. The Government is discussing the details of the Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) Gas Pipeline Project with the Governments of Iran and Pakistan. These discussions are progressing satisfactorily. Two separate, Secretary-level Joint Working Groups (JWGs), *viz.,* India-Pakistan JWG and India-Iran Special JWG (SJWG) have been constituted for this purpose. So far, two meetings each of the India-Pakistan JWG and the India-Iran SJWG have been held. The third set of meetings is scheduled for December, 2005. Various technical commercial, financial, legal and related issues were discussed in these meetings and reviewed by the Indian and Iranian Ministers at their meeting in Riyadh on 19th November on the sidelines of the International Energy Forum Round Table Conference. The Pakistan Minister is scheduled to visit India after the next meeting of the India-Pakistan JWG. It is envisaged that the project structure and Framework Agreement for the project could be finalized by early next year.

As regards gas supplies from Myanmar, in January, 2005, Minister (P&NG) participated in a trilateral Ministerial meeting between the Oil Ministers of Bangladesh, Myanmar and India. In pursuance of the trilateral Joint Press Statement released after that meeting, a Techno-Commercial

Working Committee (TCWC) of the representatives of the three countries was constituted. The first meeting of the TCWC was held in Yangon on 24th-25th February, 2005. The TCWC prepared a draft MoO to be signed by the three oil Ministers after the approval of their respective Governments. However, the approval of the MoU has been delayed on account of differences between India and Bangladesh over one preambular paragraph in the draft MoU. Minister (P&NG) visited Dhaka on 5th September, 2005 to discuss issues relating to the draft MoU. These issues continue to be under consideration by the Governments of Bangladesh and India even as India explores with Myanmar other options of importing natural gas into India from Myanmar.

The Governments of Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan have been examining the setting up of a transnational gas pipeline to exploit the available gas reserves in Turkmenistan. They have designated ADB as the lead consultant and development partner. India has been invited to join the project it has agreed to do so, initially as an 'Observer'. Minister (P&NG) has been invited to the next Steering Committee Meeting, which is tentatively scheduled to be held in Ashgabat in January, 2006.

Availability of **LPG**

†1481. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of areas in the country having cooking gas facility, State-wise;

(b) whether Government are considering to make the remaining areas equipped with cooking gas facility;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (d) As on 1.10.2005, Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) were serving about 8.72 crore LPG customers covering approximately 45% of the population of the country. The State-wise details are given in the Statement (See below). OMCs

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.